



Energy and Commerce Committee Mid-Session Review

114th Congress | First Session
January - August 2015

Creative. Collaborative. Responsive. Productive.

This is the track record of the U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee. The following report chronicles the good news coming out of 2123 Rayburn House Office Building, home of the oldest standing legislative committee in Congress and its team of hardworking, innovative, and future-oriented members.

At least twice a year since 2011, the committee has released periodic reports on its legislative and oversight record. These reports have shown a strong and consistent record of success advancing critical legislation and exposing misuse and abuse of taxpayer dollars. Under the leadership of Chairman Fred Upton, the Energy and Commerce Committee has amassed a long list of public laws, hard-hitting investigations, and widespread public support for initiatives to empower and improve the lives of the American people.

This latest summation of the panel's work provides a legislative spotlight showcasing the broad range of bills advanced by the committee and an oversight spotlight highlighting the critical work done on behalf of taxpayers. Together, this work shows how the committee's members have served as thought-leaders in the drive for a smaller, more responsive, and innovative federal government.

Legislative Spotlight

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H.R. 2, the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015

Sponsor: Michael C. Burgess, M.D.

Latest Action: Signed into law on April 16, 2015

Summary: For nearly two decades, a system of failed price controls has threatened seniors' access to Medicare with the prospect of drastic cuts to physician reimbursement, which would have reduced the number of physicians and services available to aging patients. The Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act strengthened health care for seniors, children, and all Americans by —

- Permanently repealing the broken Sustainable Growth Rate and ending the uncertainty it placed on seniors and their doctors.
- Putting in place a new system to promote higher quality care for seniors.
- Extending the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
- Strengthening Medicare over the long-term, which a new report from the Medicare trustees says will save nearly \$2.9 trillion, putting the program on a more secure financial footing for the future.

H.R. 3 / S. 1, the Keystone XL Pipeline Approval Act

Sponsor: Kevin Cramer

Latest Action: Vetoed by the President on February 24, 2015

Summary: More than six years ago, an application was filed to construct a major pipeline connecting rich energy supplies in Canada and the Midwest to refineries in the southern U.S. Thus began the saga of the Keystone XL pipeline, which has been caught in a regulatory morass ever since. To this day, this job-creating, energy-delivering project is stalled by administrative roadblocks and excuses. The Keystone XL Pipeline Approval Act is a simple solution to approve this pipeline once and for all, even as Congress works to take the politics and arbitrary process out of future projects.

H.R. 6, the 21st Century Cures Act

Sponsors: Fred Upton and Diana DeGette

Latest Action: Approved by the House on July 10, 2015, by a vote of 344-77

Summary: The 21st Century Cures Act accelerates the discovery, development, and delivery of life saving and life improving therapies and transforms the quest for faster cures by —

- Removing barriers to increased research collaboration.
- Incorporating the patient perspective into the drug development and regulatory review process.
- Measuring success and identifying diseases earlier through personalized medicine
- Modernizing clinical trials.
- Encouraging greater assimilation of health information technology into the U.S. care delivery system.
- Removing regulatory uncertainty for the development of new medical apps.
- Providing new incentives for the development of drugs for rare diseases.
- Helping the entire biomedical ecosystem coordinate more efficiently to find faster cures.
- Investing in 21st century science and next generation investigators.
- Keeping and creating jobs here at home.

H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act

Sponsor: Chris Smith

Latest Action: Approved by the House on January 22, 2015, by a vote of 242-179

Summary: Since 1976, the Hyde amendment to annual spending bills has prohibited the federal funding of abortions, and it has done so with the support of Members of Congress from both parties. The No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act enshrines the principles of the Hyde amendment in law, across federal programs by —

- Prohibiting all federal funding for abortions.
- Prohibiting federal subsidies for ACA health care plans that include coverage for abortion.
- Prohibiting the use of federal facilities for abortion.

- Prohibiting federal employees from performing abortions.

H.R. 161, the Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act

Sponsor: Mike Pompeo

Latest Action: Approved by the House on January 21, 2015, by a vote of 253-169

Summary: Natural gas pipeline infrastructure has failed to keep pace with increased production of and demand for natural gas in the U.S. And despite increased authority given to FERC, the permitting process for new pipelines remains unacceptably slow – hurting American manufacturers and consumers. Consumers in the Northeast are especially vulnerable to price spikes associated with a lack of adequate pipeline capacity. H.R. 161 offers a commonsense solution to help alleviate our pipeline infrastructure problems, bringing certainty and accountability to the regulatory process by —

- Establishing firm timelines for federal agencies reviewing natural gas pipeline permit applications while preserving critical environmental assessment processes.
- Expediting the construction of natural gas pipelines that are needed to deliver our nation's affordable energy supplies to consumers.

H.R. 212, the Drinking Water Protection Act

Sponsor: Bob Latta

Latest Action: Approved by the House on February 24, 2015, by a vote of 375-37

Summary: The Drinking Water Protection Act was introduced in the wake of a major water emergency in Toledo, Ohio, due to an increased presence of harmful algal blooms in Lake Erie. The bill requires the Environmental Protection Agency to develop and submit a strategic plan for assessing and managing risks associated with algal blooms in drinking water.

H.R. 351, the LNG Permitting Certainty and Transparency Act

Sponsor: Bill Johnson

Latest Action: Approved by the House on January 28, 2015, by a vote of 277-133

Summary: By expanding liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports, America can strengthen its economy and create jobs while increasing energy security for our allies abroad. By 2018, the construction of new LNG export projects is estimated to put up to 45,000 unemployed Americans back to work. In addition to the economic benefits and jobs resulting from building new export facilities, opening new markets for American natural gas would encourage further production of domestic energy, helping to create additional jobs and support America's manufacturing renaissance. The LNG Permitting Certainty and Transparency Act brings certainty to DOE's export approval process and helps eliminate unnecessary bureaucratic delays by —

- Placing a 30-day deadline on DOE to issue a final decision on applications to export LNG following the conclusion of the NEPA environmental review of the LNG facilities.
- Providing for expedited judicial review by the United States Court of Appeals for the circuit in which the export facility will be located.
- Requiring public disclosure of export destinations as a condition of approval of authorization to export LNG.

H.R. 398, the Trafficking Awareness Training for Health Care Act of 2015

Sponsor: Renee Ellmers

Latest Action: Approved by the House on January 27, 2015, by voice vote

Summary: Some estimates indicate there are 100,000 to 300,000 American youth currently at risk of being trafficked in the United States, and those most likely to be targeted are low-income women, foster youth, younger girls, and girls and women with a history of abuse and estrangement from family. The Trafficking Awareness Training for Health Care Act works to address the scourge of trafficking by —

- Creating a program dedicated to training health care professionals to identify the early warning signs for the act of human trafficking.
- Testing and examining the best practices needed for determining the protocol used for implementing human trafficking awareness within the medical community.

H.R. 471, the Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act

Sponsors: Tom Marino and Marsha Blackburn

Latest Action: Approved by the House on April 21, 2015, by voice vote

Summary: The bill amends the Controlled Substances Act to help prevent prescription drug abuse, establish clear and consistent enforcement standards, and ensure that patients have access to medications by promoting collaboration among government agencies, patients, and industry stakeholders.

H.R. 596, To repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and health care related provisions in the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010

Sponsor: Bradley Byrne

Latest Action: Approved by the House on February 3, 2015, by a vote of 239-186

Summary: The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act remains a controversial, highly divisive piece of health care legislation that has upended the care and coverage of millions of Americans and continues to threaten higher costs, uncertainty about whether patients can keep their plans or doctors, and more federal control over personal health care decisions. The House voted once again to repeal this law and replace it with patient-centered solutions that will lower costs, expand options and flexibility for patients and

states, protect the doctor-patient relationship, and protect patients, including those with pre-existing conditions.

H.R. 639, the Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act

Sponsor: Joe Pitts

Latest Action: Approved by the House on March 16, 2015, by voice vote

Summary: H.R. 639 would amend the Controlled Substances Act to require more timely action by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) to act on recommendations from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Currently, new drugs and substances that previously have not been marketed in the United States and that have abuse potential must be scheduled by the DEA prior to being marketed, but there is no deadline for the DEA to act after receiving a recommendation. The amount of time the DEA has taken before acting on FDA recommendations has increased significantly in recent years, delaying the availability of these drugs and substances to patients.

H.R. 647, the Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act

Sponsor: Michael C. Burgess, M.D.

Latest Action: Approved by the House on March 16, 2015, by a vote of 389-10

Summary: The bill reauthorizes Trauma Center Care Grants. These grants aid hospitals in handling their substantial uncompensated care costs from traumatic injuries.

H.R. 648, the Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act

Sponsor: Michael C. Burgess, M.D.

Latest Action: Approved by the House on March 16, 2015, by a vote of 382-15

Summary: The bill reauthorizes Trauma Care Systems Planning Grants, which support state and rural development of trauma systems. It also would reauthorize pilot projects to implement and assess regionalized emergency care models.

H.R. 734, the Federal Communications Commission Consolidated Reporting Act

Sponsor: Steve Scalise

Latest Action: Approved by the House on February 24, 2015, by a vote of 411-0

Summary: The bill reduces the number of reports the Federal Communications Commission is obligated to produce, while granting Congress, industry, and consumers timely access to the commission's best analysis of the communications landscape at the beginning of each Congress. The legislation requires one Communications Marketplace Report instead of the eight separate reports currently required. The bill also eliminates

references to four outdated reports, including one on the status of competition in the telegraph industry that dates back to 1934.

H.R. 805, the Domain Openness Through Continued Oversight Matters (DOTCOM) Act

Sponsor: John Shimkus

Latest Action: Approved by the House on June 23, 2015, by a vote of 378-25

Summary: The DOTCOM Act ensures congressional oversight over the administration's work to transition its Domain Name System authority from the United States to the global Internet community. The bill requires a report to Congress certifying that the transition plan protects the Internet by —

- Supporting and enhancing the multi-stakeholder model of Internet governance.
- Maintaining the security, stability, and resiliency of the Internet domain name system.
- Meeting the needs and expectations of the global customers and partners of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) services.
- Maintaining the openness of the Internet.
- Not replacing the role of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration with a government-led or intergovernmental organization solution.
- Ensuring the changes to the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers' bylaws that are required by the multi-stakeholder community as prerequisites to the IANA transition have been implemented.

H.R. 985, the Concrete Masonry Products, Research, Education, and Promotion Act

Sponsor: Brett Guthrie

Latest Action: Approved by the Energy and Commerce Committee on July 29, 2015

Summary: The bill authorizes a federal "check-off" program for concrete masonry products. "Check-off" programs, which are financed by industry and overseen by the appropriate federal agency, are used to support jobs by boosting the overall sales and production of a particular commodity or good without reference to a specific brand or producer.

H.R. 1190, the Protecting Seniors' Access to Medicare Act

Sponsor: Phil Roe

Latest Action: Approved by the House on June 23, 2015, by a vote of 244-154

Summary: Created by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) is an unelected, unaccountable board with enormous power to cut Medicare spending. Since its creation, there has been bipartisan opposition to this unchecked board of bureaucrats and their ability to limit spending in ways that could harm patients' access to care. The Protecting Seniors' Access to Medicare Act simply

repeals the IPAB, recognizing that Congress is better equipped to institute sensible reforms to protect and preserve Medicare for today's seniors and tomorrow's.

H.R. 1321, the Microbead-Free Waters Act

Sponsors: Fred Upton and Frank Pallone

Latest Action: Approved by the Health Subcommittee on May 14, 2015

Summary: To protect U.S. waters and their ecosystems, the bill establishes a national timeline for the prohibition on the sale or distribution of personal care products containing synthetic plastic microbeads. This legislation would establish a national standard so that manufacturers would not have to comply with the patchwork of state laws.

H.R. 1344, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act

Sponsors: Brett Guthrie and Lois Capps

Latest Action: Approved by the Energy and Commerce Committee on July 29, 2015

Summary: The bill amends the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

H.R. 1462, the Protecting Our Infants Act

Sponsors: Katherine Clark and Steve Stivers

Latest Action: Approved by the Energy and Commerce Committee on July 29, 2015

Summary: The bill will combat the rise of prenatal opioid abuse and neonatal abstinence syndrome. In recent years, there has been a steady rise in opioid and heroin addiction. This bill will address the growing problem of neonatal abstinence syndrome and help protect newborns and infants.

H.R. 1599, the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act

Sponsors: Mike Pompeo and G.K. Butterfield

Latest Action: Approved by the House on July 23, 2015, by a vote of 275-150

Summary: In recent years, a series of state ballot initiatives have led to a national conversation about the use and labeling of foods containing genetically engineered plants or ingredients. Individual labeling initiatives threaten to generate a patchwork of differing state and local requirements that would create unnecessary confusion and cost among consumers and food manufacturers without achieving the goal of improving consumer awareness of public health. The Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act provides uniformity and clarity for consumers by —

- Affirming the current authority of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to ensure the safety of genetically engineered plants used in food products.
- Codifying FDA's current practice regarding requirements for labeling of genetically engineered plant ingredients in food that are materially different from comparable foods, such as having different nutritional or allergenic effects from traditional foods.
- Creating uniform national standards for labeling of food products containing genetically engineered plants or ingredients.
- Defining "genetic engineering" so that those wishing to make voluntary marketing claims related to use or non-use of these technologies can do so. In this way, the bill aligns treatment of labeling requirements for foods containing genetic engineering with current standards for labeling organically grown food products.
- Requiring FDA to establish standards for the term "natural" when applied to foods.

H.R. 1725, the National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting (NASPER) Reauthorization Act

Sponsors: Ed Whitfield and Joseph Kennedy

Latest Action: Approved by the Energy and Commerce Committee on July 29, 2015

Summary: The bill reauthorizes the National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting program to support state prescription drug monitoring programs.

H.R. 1734, the Improving Coal Combustion Residuals Regulation Act

Sponsor: David McKinley

Latest Action: Approved by the House on July 22, 2015, by a vote of 258-166

Summary: The Coal Combustion Residuals Regulation Act provides for the safe management and disposal of coal ash in a manner that preserves jobs and encourages recycling. The recycling and beneficial use of coal ash materials keeps utility costs low, provides for low-cost durable construction materials like concrete and roofing materials, and reduces waste. Estimates project this legislation will protect approximately 316,000 jobs. H.R. 1734 improves on EPA's rule by —

- Setting up enforceable state permit programs.
- Directly incorporating EPA's final rule to set the minimum statutory requirements for state permit programs.
- Allowing states to make site-specific, risk-based permit decisions for coal ash just as they would for other permit programs under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA).
- Requiring states to ensure that information is made available on the Internet.
- Treating inactive impoundments in the same manner as the final rule – if they do not close by the closure deadline, they must comply with all of the same requirements as an active disposal unit.

- Allowing direct enforcement of the requirements in the final rule by a regulatory agency and eliminating the prospect of a dual regulatory program – the legislation solves the problem regarding the lack of authority for state permit programs to operate in lieu of the federal requirements. Either the state or EPA will be implementing a permit program in every state.
- Retaining the ability to bring citizen suits under RCRA while ensuring these suits will no longer be the only mechanism for enforcement.

H.R. 1770, the Data Security and Breach Notification Act

Sponsors: Marsha Blackburn and Peter Welch

Latest Action: Approved by the Energy and Commerce Committee on April 15, 2015

Summary: Data breaches are a growing problem as e-commerce evolves and Americans spend more of their time and conduct more of their activities online. Technology has empowered consumers to purchase goods and services on demand, but it has also empowered criminals to target businesses and steal a host of personal data. This costs consumers tens of billions of dollars each year, imposes all kinds of hassles, and can have a lasting impact on their credit. The Data Security and Breach Notification Act helps protect consumers by —

- Setting, for the first time, a national standard for reasonable security measures and practices to protect and secure personal information.
- Requiring certain entities that collect and maintain consumers' personal information to secure such information and to provide notice to affected individuals in the case of a breach of security involving personal information.
- Defining personal information to include personal information tied to ID theft and/or payment fraud, such as: Social Security numbers; financial account credentials; other account credentials, including biometric, for accounts that allow consumers to obtain money or make purchases; drivers license or other government-issued unique identification number; amongst others.
- Creating a uniform national policy, replacing the patchwork of state and territory laws.
- Defining a violation of the law as an unfair and deceptive act or practice under the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Act, with the FTC or state attorneys general able to conduct enforcement.

H.R. 2042, the Ratepayer Protection Act

Sponsors: Ed Whitfield, Sanford Bishop, Morgan Griffith, Collin Peterson

Latest Action: Approved by the House on June 24, 2015, by a vote of 247-180

Summary: EPA's rule for existing power plants, referred to by the agency as its "Clean Power Plan," seeks to fundamentally change how electricity is generated, distributed, and consumed in the United States. Under EPA's unprecedented rule, states would be required to submit complex state plans to EPA in 2016, and to begin to meet interim goals in 2022

and a final goal in 2030. For states that do not submit a satisfactory plan, EPA would impose a federal plan, a model of which was proposed on August 3, 2015. EPA estimated in the proposed rule annual costs of \$5.5 billion to \$7.5 billion in 2020 and \$7.3 billion to \$8.8 billion in 2030. But according to other forecasts, the potential costs are much higher and could range from \$366 billion to \$479 billion over the period 2017-2031. The Ratepayer Protection Act protects states, businesses, and families by —

- Allowing for timely judicial review before states would be required to comply with the rule.
- Ensuring a state would not be forced to implement a state or federal plan that would have a significant adverse effect on its ratepayers.

H.R. 2045, the Targeting Rogue and Opaque Letters (TROL) Act

Sponsors: Michael C. Burgess, M.D., and Marcy Kaptur

Latest Action: Approved by the Energy and Commerce Committee on April 29, 2015

Summary: In recent years, so-called Patent Trolls have emerged as a menace to small and innovative businesses by abusing the patent system, which when adhered to properly plays a critical role in protecting the intellectual property of U.S. innovators. To clamp down on abuses, the bill increases transparency and accountability in patent demand letters so businesses can weed out deceptive letters. The Act also establishes a national standard for the enforcement of abusive patent demand letters and allows the Federal Trade Commission and state attorneys general to levy fines on bad actors.

H.R. 2505, the Medicare Advantage Coverage Transparency Act

Sponsor: Gus Bilirakis

Latest Action: Approved by the House on June 17, 2015, by voice vote

Summary: The bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services annually to report enrollment data for all Medicare programs, including enrollment under a Medicare Advantage plan and enrollment under Part D (Voluntary Prescription Drug Benefit Program).

H.R. 2507, the Increasing Regulatory Fairness Act

Sponsor: Joe Pitts

Latest Action: Approved by the House on June 17, 2015, by voice vote

Summary: The bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services to determine and announce annually for 2017 and each subsequent year: (1) the annual Medicare Advantage capitation rate for each Medicare Advantage payment area for the year concerned; (2) the risk and other factors to be used in adjusting such rates for monthly payments in such year; (3) the Medicare Advantage region-specific non-drug monthly benchmark amount for each Medicare Advantage region and each Medicare Advantage

regional plan for which a bid was submitted; and (4) the major policy changes to the risk adjustment model and the five-star rating system that are determined to have an economic impact.

***H.R. 2570, the Strengthening Medicare Advantage Through
Innovation and Transparency for Seniors Act***

Sponsor: Cathy McMorris Rodgers

Latest Action: Approved by the House on June 17, 2015, by voice vote

Summary: The bill would create a three-year demonstration program to test the use of value-based insurance design methodologies under the eligible Medicare Advantage plans. Plans with a varying benefit structures would lower cost sharing for high value services.

H.R. 2576, the TSCA Modernization Act

Sponsor: John Shimkus

Latest Action: Approved by the House on June 23, 2015, by a vote of 398-1

Summary: The TSCA Modernization Act updates the 40-year-old Toxic Substances Control Act to improve chemical safety and encourage continued innovation and economic growth. It will provide the public greater confidence in the safety of American-made chemicals and the products that contain them, and facilitate interstate and global commerce, by —

- Providing EPA the tools to ensure chemicals in commerce are safer for consumers.
- Creating a new system for EPA to evaluate and manage risks associated with chemicals already on the market.
- Setting deadlines for EPA to take action.
- Ensuring user fees paid to EPA for specific purposes are used solely for those purposes.
- Providing limited preemption of state law.
- Maintaining protection of confidential business information.

H.R. 2582, the Seniors' Health Care Plan Protection Act

Sponsors: Marsha Blackburn and Brett Guthrie

Latest Action: Approved by the House on June 17, 2015, by voice vote

Summary: The bill would curb the Department of Health and Human Services' authority to terminate Medicare Advantage contracts for plans failing to achieve minimum quality ratings under the Medicare Advantage STARS rating system.

H.R. 2583, the Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act

Sponsors: Greg Walden and Adam Kinzinger

Latest Action: Approved by the Energy and Commerce Committee on June 3, 2015

Summary: The FCC Process Reform Act brings transparency, accountability, and predictability to the FCC by —

- Setting minimum comment periods for rulemaking proceedings.
- Eliminating the practice of placing large amounts of data into the record on the last day of the public comment period.
- Increasing transparency regarding items before the commissioners.
- Publishing the text of proposed rules, the draft of a rulemaking when circulated to commissioners, and the text of a new rule on the day it is adopted.
- Setting timelines for certain FCC actions.
- Requiring the publication of certain documents on the FCC's website and a searchable online database for consumer complaints.
- Allowing more than two commissioners to meet privately when certain safeguards for transparency are met.
- Improving small business participation in FCC proceedings.
- Posting the commission's internal procedures on the FCC website.
- Requiring quarterly reports on pending decisions and congressional investigations.
- Publishing information on items placed on delegated authority.

H.R. 2820, the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Reauthorization Act

Sponsors: Chris Smith and Doris Matsui

Latest Action: Approved by the Energy and Commerce Committee on July 29, 2015

Summary: The bill reauthorizes the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act to provide federal support for cord blood donation, a national bone marrow registry, and research essential to increasing patient access to transplants.

H.R. 3154, the E-Warranty Act

Sponsors: Markwayne Mullin and Dave Loebsack

Latest Action: Approved by the Energy and Commerce Committee on July 29, 2015

Summary: The bill allows manufacturers to provide warranty information electronically instead of solely in paper form, easing the regulatory burden on job creators and giving customers more convenient options to find warranty information.

H.R. 3242, the Child Nicotine Poisoning Prevention Act

Sponsors: Susan Brooks and Elizabeth Esty

Last Action: Advanced by the Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade Subcommittee on July 23, 2015

Summary: The bill would ensure that liquid nicotine (a product used in open system e-cigarettes and other e-smoking applications) is sold in child-resistant packaging. Liquid

nicotine can come in many colors and flavors and can appear attractive to children, leading to accidental poisoning.

S. 535, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act

Sponsors: Rob Portman, Ed Whitfield

Latest Action: Signed into law on April 30, 2015

Summary: Energy efficiency has been a key pillar of Republicans' energy reform efforts by encouraging smart solutions that save money and resources. The Energy Efficiency Improvement Act pairs together a series of sensible reforms including —

- Ensuring energy-saving grid-enabled water heaters can continue to be manufactured and sold.
- Facilitating greater cooperation between landlords and tenants to lower energy consumption in commercial buildings.
- Improving the collection and use of data regarding energy usage in federally leased buildings.

The Architecture of Abundance

Latest Action: Four Titles approved by the Energy and Power Subcommittee July 22, 2015

Summary: The Architecture of Abundance is the Energy and Commerce Committee's comprehensive approach to modernizing our nation's energy policy to reflect how technological advances have unlocked a new era of American energy abundance. The draft bill advanced by the subcommittee includes building blocks to bring American energy policy in line with America's energy potential by —

- Promoting natural gas pipeline development.
- Enhancing grid security and emergency preparedness for energy supply disruptions.
- Protecting against grid emergencies.
- Encouraging resilient infrastructure.
- Supporting energy and manufacturing workforce development.
- Recognizing that U.S. energy abundance promotes enhanced energy security.
- Increasing federal agency energy efficiency to save taxpayer money.
- Promoting private sector innovation and energy efficient technology.
- Enhancing energy performance contracting.
- Facilitating energy retrofitting for schools.
- Promoting accountability and transparency for regulators.

Oversight Spotlight

Cybersecurity and Consumer Protection

- [Requests](#) for [information](#) and review of post-breach protections for consumers

- [Letter](#) examines the complex but critical world of digital certificates on the web
- [Big picture hearing](#) sets stage for complex cybersecurity work

Federal Select Agent Program

- [Hearing](#) on [shipments](#) of live anthrax from a [DOD](#) lab
- [News coverage](#) highlights threats of [select agent](#) mishandling

Holding Government Agencies Accountable

- [Results](#) of a government watchdog report on Commerce Department OIG
- [Hearing](#) on [oversight failures](#) and the radiological incident in New Mexico
- Examining potential [conflicts of interest](#), [decision-making](#), a costly [server move](#), and questionable [office closures](#) at the FCC
- [Addressing](#) management breakdowns at the Chemical Safety Board
- [Examining](#) management challenges facing the 340B drug discount program

Medicare and Medicaid

- [Hearing](#) on fraud and abuse in the Medicare Part D program
- [Letter](#) questioning the decision to ease fraud reduction targets
- [Hearing](#) on waste and fraud in Medicaid
- [Hearing](#) examining the administration's approval of Medicaid demonstrations
- Holding the [administration accountable](#) for changes to Medicare Advantage

Mental Health

- [Hearing](#) on "scathing" [government watchdog report](#) exposes duplication, lack of leadership by agency tasked with coordinating efforts for those with serious mental illness
- [Letter](#) to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration outlines concerns about review and management of evidence-based programs
- [Evidence](#) mounts about breakdowns in the mental health system

Opioid Abuse Epidemic

- [Powerful](#) hearing series on drug and opioid abuse epidemic examining [professional and academic perspectives](#), [federal policies](#), and [state and local perspectives](#) and [reform efforts](#)
- [Letter](#) to FDA about labeling disparities

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

- [Pressing](#) for answers on [unlawful payments](#) to insurers
- [Seeking answers](#) about privacy and security on HealthCare.gov

Planned Parenthood

- [Letter](#) seeking answers about practices discussed in "abhorrent" video

The Dangers of Influenza

- [Examining](#) preparedness for the avian influenza outbreak
- Calling on agencies to learn lessons from [vaccine mismatch](#) and improve future [public health response and preparedness](#)

Vehicle Safety

- [News coverage](#) highlights importance of committee work on [auto cybersecurity](#)
- IG [weighs in](#) on NHTSA's challenges, mirroring committee's findings, as agency responds to [violations](#)

Conclusion: Progress and Potential

This record of success in the first seven months of the 114th Congress maintains the legislative production and policy innovation that have become hallmarks of the Energy and Commerce Committee in recent years. The committee has tackled a wide range of issues and found bipartisan agreement on vexing public policy challenges even as members stand firm on their core policy principles.

The committee is continuing its aggressive pace, chalking up more than 70 hearings and more than 20 bills approved by the House. This is on par with the impressive record put up by the committee at this point in the 112th and 113th Congresses, and means the panel is on track to achieve its major legislative and oversight priorities.

As ever, the committee is focused on supporting jobs and economic growth; modernizing government for the innovation era; and protecting families, communities, and civic initiatives. These principles have guided the panel for more than four years, and they continue to drive its work today.

Looking ahead to the rest of 2015, the committee has already outlined an aggressive reform agenda. A sampling of major policy initiatives include —

Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade

- Vehicle Safety
- Cybersecurity and e-Commerce

Communications and Technology

- Broadband Infrastructure
- Spectrum

Energy and Power

- Energy Infrastructure and Innovation
- America's Role as a Global Energy Power

Environment and the Economy

- Nuclear Waste

- Modernizing Environmental Policy in Partnership with the States

Health

- Mental Health
- Medicaid and Public Health

Oversight and Investigations

- Energy and Environmental Agency Oversight and Mission
- Rooting Out Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in Health Programs

The future for the committee is bright. The progress delivered so far in 2015 proves that there is good news to be found in Washington, D.C., and the initiatives under development show near limitless potential for continued success on behalf of the American people.